

Division chief receives Meritorious Civilian Award

by Timothy Anderl, AFRL Headquarters

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO — At the annual Contracting Awards banquet, recently, Air Force Research Laboratory Commander Maj. Gen. Richard Paul recognized the chief of the Air Force Research Laboratory's Acquisition Support Division, Detachment 1 of the contracting office with the Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

Paula K. Plowman, who has been a division chief since 1989, received the award from Paul at the 1999 Contracting Awards banquet at the Wright-Patterson AFB, Officers' Club Grand Ballroom on March 22. Paul was also the guest speaker for the awards program.

Annually, AFRL awards contracts valued at \$700 million a year. Plowman supports AFRL in this effort and manages more than 1,200 existing contracts valued at over \$3 billion.

The award nomination said that Plowman's "aggressive" pursuit of contract delegation was instrumental in obtaining grant and cooperative agreement authority for Wright Laboratory, one of AFRL's predecessor super labs. She also ensured that proper training was available to the contract office so when a delegation arrived, the office was prepared to act.

According to the nomination, "Plowman has often lent her expertise to the development of new and streamlined processes and procedures, which continue to have a lasting impact not only on the laboratory community but on the Air Force as well."

Plowman helped formulate the DOD Research and Development Simplified Solicitation Procedures and Contract Format, which simplified the effort and paperwork needed to award critical contracts rapidly. This change in acquisition philosophy, as well as others, led to Plowman's involvement on the Model Research and Development contract team, an AFMC initiative aimed at revolutionizing the R&D contracting processes to include only vital steps and information.

In addition, Plowman has been selected to participate on an Air Force-wide team to streamline and simplify Air Force source selection and procedures. She is also a charter member of the Wright Laboratory Acquisition Critical Process Team where she spearheaded efforts to streamline government regulations concerning research and development acquisition.

"Ms. Plowman is a first-rate professional who maintains the highest standards of excellence and commands the greatest level of respect," the nomination said. "She is a recognized expert in her field, and her efforts contribute immeasurably to the productivity and effectiveness of not only [AFRL], but AFMC and the Air Force." @